

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

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L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /054 W

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R 161319Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 1648

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0950

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : N/A

SUBJECT : PEACE CORPS ACTIVITIES IN ARABIAN PENINSULA

REFS : TEHRAN 7904, MANAMA 768

1. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH BAHRAIN/
OMAN PEACE CORPS DIRER OR BURNS AND DESK OFFICER MIEDEMA
THAT PEACE CORPS WASHINGTON WISHES TO PUSH AHEAD SOONEST
WITH PLAN TO PUT PEACE CORPS OPERATION IN BAHRAIN UNDER
ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL OF PEACE CORPS TEHRAN WITH TEHRAN
DIRECTOR THOMAS HAVING DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY AS SOLE PEACE
CORPS OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING BAHRAIN
PROGRAM. AS PRACTICAL MATTER WE HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH
THIS ARRANGEMENT.

2. AS INDICATED MANAMA REFTTEL, HOWEVER, I HAVE FELT IT
NECESSARY TO SOUND OUT APPROPRIATE GOB OFFICIALS ABOUT
POSSIBLE POLITICAL SENSITIVITY OF HAVING BAHRAIN PROGRAM
DIRECTED FROM IRAN. THIS SENSITIVITY EXISTS. WHILE GOB
MINISTER OF EDUCATION WHOSE MINISTRY IS PRIMARY BENE-
FICIARY OF PEACE CORPS ACTIVITY INDICATED HE SEES NO
PRACTICAL PROBLEM WITH OUR RUNNING PROGRAM FROM TEHRAN,
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MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT SHIRAWI HAS SUGGESTED SUCH AN

ARRANGEMENT HAS SUFFICIENT POTENTIAL POLITICAL SENSITIVITY IN BAHRAIN AS TO REQUIRE OUR KEEPING VISIBILITY OF THE ARRANGEMENT VERY LOW HERE. SHIRAWI SAID "WE WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH YOUR DOING THIS IF YOU HAD NOT TOLD US YOU WERE DOING IT".

3. IN VIEW THIS MIXED REACTION, I DISCUSSED QUESTION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER NOVEMBER 14. WHILE HE AGREED THERE ARE ADVANTAGES TO HAVING PROGRAM RUN FROM TEHRAN RATHER THAN MUSCAT HE TOOK VERY SERIOUS VIEW OF POSSIBLE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS IN BAHRAIN IF IT APPEARED THAT "U.S. EMBASSY IN IRAN SOMEHOW OVERSEEING PEACE CORPS PROGRAM IN BAHRAIN". HE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE PROPOSED ARRANGEMENT IS PRIMARILY AN INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE USG AFFAIR AND IF TEHRAN PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR THOMAS MANAGED BAHRAIN PROGRAM, HIS APPEARANCES IN BAHRAIN WOULD BE QUIET AFFAIRS AND HIS CONTACT WITH GOB LIMITED LARGELY TO WORKING-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS ON PLACEMENT AND PROGRESS OF VOLUNTEERS. IN THIS LIGHT FOREIGN MINISTER CAME UP WITH FOLLOWING FORMULATION: IT IS UNACCEPTABLE FOR "PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR IRAN" TO ADMINISTER PEACE CORPS ACTIVITY IN BAHRAIN. BAHRAIN PROGRAM MAY BE ADMINISTERED ONLY BY "PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR BAHRAIN". IF "PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR BAHRAIN" WISHES TO RESIDE IN TEHRAN AND SPEND MOST OF HIS TIME THERE GOB COULD CARE LESS SO LONG AS ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM HERE IS SATISFACTORY.

4. IF PEACE CORPS WASHINGTON SEES NO PROBLEM THOMAS ASSUMING THIS SPLIT PERSONALITY, NEITHER EMBASSY NOR GOB HAS ANY PROBLEM WITH HIS ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR PEACE CORPS ACTIVITIES IN BAHRAIN. WE EXPECT TO SEE HIM FREQUENTLY.

TWINAM

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